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Q88

With reference to the economic history of medieval India, the term 'Araghatta' refers to (a) Bonded labour (b) Land grant made to military officers (c) Waterwheel used in the irrigation of land (d) Wasteland converted to cultivated land Official key: C.

UPSC Civil Services Prelims 2016 · General Studies · 2 marks · Economy

Indian economy, budget, schemes - Prelims GS Paper I.

Explanation**(a)**

Bonded labour in medieval usage appears as visti, debt bondage or other unfree labour, not as araghatta. This option is not the key.

(b)

Land grants to military officers are *iqta* (in the *Delhi Sultanate*) or related service tenures, not araghatta. This option is wrong.

(c) Official key

Araghatta (ara-ghatta) in the economic history of medieval India denotes the waterwheel or Persian-wheel type device used to lift water for irrigation. That is why (c) is the official key.

(d)

Wasteland brought under the plough is expansion of cultivation (banjar to abad), not the meaning of araghatta. This option is not the key.

Summary

Official key is (c) waterwheel used in the irrigation of land. Texts and inscriptions use araghatta for a wheel with pots that raises water from wells or streams, an important irrigation technology in dryland and well-irrigation zones. It is not a labour status, a military grant, or a land-reclamation term. *Persian wheel* is the later popular name for a similar geared lift. Only (c) matches the term.

Related possible facts

These can be asked in a future Prelims paper.

Persian wheel

Geared water-lifting wheel, saqia / araghatta family

Rahat

Hindi/Punjabi name for the Persian wheel

Iqta

Sultanate assignment of revenue for military service

Irrigation in Sultanate-Mughal times

Wells, tanks, canals and lift devices together

Noria

Related water-wheel technology in other Eurasian regions

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